

How Could The Man After God's Own Heart Fail? Pleasant Plains 12-16-2018AM NICK ANGEL

- ***READ Acts 13:13-23*** Paul's standard mode of operation when it came to his teaching in a new location can be found within this text that we just read together. He arrives in Pisidian Antioch with his companions, and he makes his way to the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath. After listening to the synagogue officials read from the Law and the Prophets, Paul stands up and begins to do much of what Stephen did in **Acts 7** as he shares with the audience a condensed version of Israel's history.
- He speaks of God choosing their fathers and leading them out of Egypt. He speaks of the wilderness wanderings, and God's destruction of the Canaanite people's. He speaks about the judges and the prophets, and then he speaks of the kings Saul and David. He speaks only very briefly of Saul, but he goes into much greater detail concerning king David. In fact, he goes to the degree that he refers to David as being a man after God's own heart who would do his will. This acknowledgement of David being such a man is a quotation from **I Samuel 13:14** when God informs Saul that his kingdom would cease to continue, and that a truly God-fearing man would take his place on the physical throne of Israel. There is no mention of Solomon or any other kings for Paul goes straight from David to the Savior Jesus who was a descendent of this great king. Surely Paul is putting a great deal of emphasis on the importance of king David and the role he played in God's plan for man's redemption.
- Someone who might not be all that familiar with David, but who hears this glowingly talk of Paul concerning him, might have a desire to go to the Old Testament to do some reading on this man. In doing so they would find out that this man came with a very impressive resumé of great successes and triumphs within his life. It isn't hard to understand why Paul would speak of him so well.
 - He was anointed the next king of Israel while being the youngest of Jesse's sons. (**I Samuel 16**)
 - He shortly follows this up by being the lone Israelite that was willing to stand up to face the Philistine giant Goliath. He not only stood up to him, but he also defeated him. (**I Samuel 17**)
 - After the death of Saul and his installment as king, David takes back Jerusalem (**II Samuel 5:7**), brings the ark to Jerusalem (**I Chronicles 15:23-29**), & numerous times defeats the enemies of Israel.
 - Through all of these successes comes the ultimate success in that God made a covenant with David that his throne would be eternally established in Israel. (**II Samuel 7:16**)
- However, this does not mean that David was a perfect man. While he would've been able to boast of great successes and triumphs, he would've also had to admit to his fair share of difficulties and failures during his life.
 - Saul becomes jealous of David's popularity and being anointed as king, and he seeks to kill him. (**I Samuel 19-15**)
 - David's son Amnon rapes his sister Tamar, and David does not seek justice or retribution. This leads to Absalom killing Amnon for his great sin. (**II Samuel 13**)
 - Absalom is overcome with anger with his father and seeks to lead a rebellion against David and his throne. This sad situation ends with Absalom being killed. (**II Samuel 16,17**)
 - David takes an unauthorized census of the people, and God punishes the entirety of the people through a plague that caused great harm and death. (**II Samuel 24 & I Chronicles 21**)
 - David is not allowed to be the king who builds the temple for the Lord because he had "shed much blood and have waged great wars." (**I Chronicles 22:8**)
- It could very well be that God telling David that he had shed too much blood and waged wars are one in the same thing, or it could be a possibility that David's mistakes that led to the shedding of blood was also standing in the way of him being able to build God's glorious house. Yes, David shed much blood in defense of God's people, but he also had blood on his hands through his mistakes. His inaction against Amnon led to Absalom killing him, and then the death and chaos that ensued from Absalom's rebellion. Yet, even this might not be seen as David's greatest mistake that led to innocent blood being shed. That might very well be reserved for his sins with Bathsheba.

- This particular chapter in David's life might very well leave the first time reader with a very serious and honest question...I thought this David guy was the *"man after God's own heart?"* How could it be that this man was involved in a situation where lust, adultery, deception, murder, and death were all present? Sure we can all understand how he got to where he did with these other situations, but this is a whole different story. How could a "godly" man get caught up in all of this? This is even extreme for a mid-day soap opera! All of this would very likely lead to the question, "How could this man after God's own heart fail so miserably??" This is the question that is posed in a book entitled, *"How To Ruin Your Life"* by Geiger, and I would like to use the rest of our time this morning looking at the mistakes of David with Bathsheba and three reasons he found himself in such a predicament.

I. David's Greatest Failure (II Samuel 11 & 12)

A. David sees Bathsheba bathing & pursues her to the point of fornication. (II Samuel 11:1-4)

1. It is during the springtime when the armies of the nations would go out to battle that David instead finds himself remaining back in Jerusalem. It is during one of the evenings that David finds himself up on the rooftop of his home. It is likely that this would've been a place that David was familiar with. The structure of residences during his time would've most likely had a flat roof where one could go for some time to relax or just to get away. As the king, David no doubt would have greatly valued the opportunities to get away to collect his thoughts and let his mind rest from the daily duties of being king.
2. On this particular evening, David finds himself being able to see a woman who is also on her rooftop, but she is bathing. The text tells us that she was very beautiful, and David's eyes no doubt lingered upon her beauty. In fact, his mind lingered upon her beauty to the point that he began to ask around concerning who she was. He is informed that she was married to Uriah the Hittite, but this doesn't seem to be of much concern to David. He sends for her to come to his home, he lies with her, and then he sends her back to her own home. This would've been wicked in the sight of God just being what it is as adultery and fornication, but the problems are quickly compounded when Bathsheba becomes pregnant.

B. Bathsheba becomes pregnant, and David tries to cover up his actions with trickery & deception. (II Samuel 11:5-13)

1. After Bathsheba tells David that she is pregnant, David sends for Uriah who was presently stationed with the armies who are fighting of Ammon at the city of Rabbah. David is fully aware of what will happen if Uriah comes home from war weeks or months later and finds his wife being pregnant. He would fully be aware of her impropriety and that it would lead to digging so that he might find out who took his wife for their own. In David's mind, the best way to cover up his sin was to make it plausible that the baby was in fact Uriah's.
2. Upon Uriah's arrival, David inquires as to how the battle is going. David then sends Uriah to his home so that he might be able to wash his feet and rest up from his fighting and journey. No doubt David was hoping that Uriah would likewise enjoy the company of his wife, but instead he slept at the door of David's house. When David asks why this was done, Uriah replied that he couldn't go home, eat, drink, and be with his wife while the rest of his comrades were on the battle field fighting for their king, kingdom, and lives. Uriah was truly an honorable man!
3. David tells Uriah to stay one more day before he was to go back to battle. That evening David calls Uriah back and invites him to eat and drink with him to the point that he was drunk. Again, it seems to me that David was hoping that Uriah would return to his home and be with Bathsheba in his drunken state, but instead he once again slept at David's home and would not go to be with his wife. David had tried many different ways to trick Uriah into being with his wife so David's actions might be covered up, but nothing had worked. David would either have to confess to his actions, or he would have to take his treachery to another level.

C. When his deception fails, David orders Uriah to be put on the front lines to be killed in battle.

(II Samuel 11:14-26)

1. Unfortunately for Uriah, David only continued to spiral downward, and the king sent word to Joab that Uriah might be put on the front lines of the fiercest battle so that he might be struck down and killed. What's even worse and more shameful for David is that he sent this letter by the hand of the man who's wife he had stolen and who's life he was about to take.
2. Joab did as the king commanded, Joab was left to die, and word was sent to David letting him know what had taken place. Whereas David might have normally been upset by such recklessness in battle, he was instead pleased and replies with what we might say in our day and vernacular, "stuff happens." Bathsheba eventually hears word of what has taken place and she mourns as one would expect. However, once her days of mourning were past, David sends for her again and this time he takes her as his own wife. I can't help but believe that David must have been so proud of himself for pulling this whole charade off and getting his woman in the end. However the Lord was certainly not pleased.

D. David fails to recognize his great failure and it leads to heartbreak. **(II Samuel 11:27-12:14)**

1. In fact, **II Samuel 11:27** states, *"But the thing that David has done was evil in the sight of the Lord."* This led the Lord to send Nathan to David with the story about the rich man, the poor man, and the poor man's little ewe lamb. The poor man treated this lamb as if it were his actual child. It meant everything to this poor man. And yet the rich man snatched the lamb away from the poor man, killed it, prepared it, and served it to a traveler as if it were nothing.
2. David hears this story and is completely incensed by what he has just heard. He declares that such a man is worthy of death and at the very least he should be made to pay four times restitution for the evil thing he had done. He even goes so far as to say that this man had no compassion on the poor man and his love for his little lamb.
3. It is at this point that Nathan turns the tables on David and declares him as being the one whom he was upset with. *"You are the man!"* were the words told to David by the trusted prophet. Nathan rebukes David's wicked actions, and pronounces that the sword would never depart from his house, that evil would be raised up against his household, and worst of all... the child that he had conceived with Bathsheba would eventually die. David's greatest mistakes sure led to his greatest heartbreak...but what led to these great failures?

II. 3 Reasons David Failed

A. He isolated himself.

1. I am convinced that the information given to us in **II Samuel 11:2** was given to us for a reason. I'm convinced that the Holy Spirit wanted us to understand the circumstances that surrounded David's great mistakes, and what we find out is that David stayed back in Jerusalem while nearly all if not all of the most important people in his life were away battling the enemy. Nathan seems to have remained in Jerusalem, but he isn't seen in the story until the end. Joab, who unfortunately followed David's murderous commands in this instance, would later on prove to be a person who was willing to stand up to David when he wasn't doing as he ought to.
2. Twice in the chapters to follow we find Joab challenging David's behavior, actions, and choices. In **II Samuel 19**, Joab confronts David while he is mourning Absalom's death because it was not giving any appreciation to all of the servants who had been faithful to David during his awful ordeal. Later on Joab questions David's decision to conduct an unauthorized census. **(II Samuel 24)** Although David had the final say, Joab tried to stop David from doing something he ought not be doing, and this is a valuable commodity to have.
3. We especially see the truth in this when we consider that David had no one to around who was going to call out his ungodly behavior with Bathsheba. Instead of other godly individuals

stepping up and trying to stop David, apparently everyone just turned their heads and let the king be the king. He isolated himself from those who would help him stay on the straight and narrow, and our decision to do this same thing will only lead us to equal ruin. God put us in local spiritual families for a reason. We are to spend much time together to encourage one another to love and good works. (**Hebrews 10:24,25**) Additionally, we are to be on the lookout for one another and if we see anyone overcome in a trespass then we are to strive to restore such a one to the path of righteousness. (**Galatians 6:1**) We are always better off being surrounded by those of like faith who possess the same goals as we possess, and David failed to keep those around him who would help him to be godly, and it cost him dearly.

B. He failed to stay busy.

1. Again referencing **II Samuel 11:1**, David had decided to not go out and be a part of his duty as king of battling with his armies during the spring time. Instead, he stayed back in Jerusalem and seemed to not have all that much going on. Sure there were times when the king might take a break on his rooftop, but instead Off fleeing from the temptation that was before him by being busy with things that would keep him occupied...David decided to spend his time getting Bathsheba to his home so he could commit sin with her.
2. We have all probably heard it said that idleness is the devil's workshop, and we might even be able to say that we have experienced that to be true first hand. How many of our mistakes and poor decisions have come from us simply being bored and not having anything constructive to do? If we find ourselves bored and without good works to be busy doing then we best believe that Satan will find something for us to do, and we can't think that it would be anything good for us. We would do well to remember the words of Paul from **Ephesians 5:15,16**, *"Therefore, be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil."* We each only have so much time in a day and what a shame it would be for us to waste that time with boredom, frivolous pursuits, or worst of all sin. David found himself lingering over Bathsheba in his boredom, but may we better by staying busy doing the good works that we ought to be encouraging one another to do.

C. He was blinded to himself.

1. The last key to David's failure was his inability to recognize just how far down into the sinful black hole he had gone. This man after God's own heart had not just lusted...but he had committed adultery. He had not just sinned...but he had tried to cover it up. He not only betrayed a trusted countryman...but he had him killed. David had committed evil acts that he probably wouldn't have ever dreamed of, and yet he was completely oblivious to them.
2. The story told by Nathan was most certainly told for David's benefit so that he might recognize the gravity of his own sin, but he completely missed himself in the story. He had been so consumed in pursuing only what he desired that he had completely ignored the path of distraction that he had left in his wake because not only had Uriah been killed, but it seems as if others had died, as well. And of course, the greatest travesty was the death of an innocent baby. It is truly shocking that David was so blinded to his own sin, but we can be guilty of the very same thing within our own lives. This seems to be the case with Jesus's teaching about proper judging in **Matthew 7:1-5**. It isn't that we can't judge, but we must do so without failing to recognize our own mistakes. David was enraged over the rich man, but he failed to recognize that he was indeed the rich man. May we not become oblivious to our shortcomings, but be well aware and repent before they lead us to similar ruin.

David's life was filled with great success, but also great heartbreak and failure. Yet, those failures didn't come from nothing for he made great mistakes that lead to such failure. May we learn from David's example so that we might be able to avoid such failures and build ourselves up as true people who are after God's own heart.